

Chair's Aide-Mémoire

Joint Meeting of Working Groups I, II and III of the Conference Committee for IEE Follow-up (CoC-IEE)

Tuesday 24 March 2009

Chaired by Vic Heard, Chair WG I

Progress report on implementing the IPA subject to funding

1. Management presented a status report on implementation of the Immediate Plan of Action (IPA), highlighting that, three months into a three-year programme, over half the IPA actions had been initiated. This had required extensive staff involvement from both headquarters and decentralized offices. The Management paper entitled *Progress report on actions in implementing the IPA subject to funding* is available at http://www.fao.org/uploads/media/ProgressReport%20IPAEnglish_1.pdf
2. The estimated costs to support IPA implementation and the requirements for voluntary contributions for 2010-11 and 2009 had been reduced, respectively from USD 25.76 million to USD 22.80 million, and from USD 21.8 million to USD 18.6 million (plus 7% Project Support Costs). The Trust Fund for IPA implementation had received confirmed pledges from donors for a total amount of USD 6.3 million, while the total amount of cash available in the Trust Fund amounted to USD 3.15 million. Thus there was a significant shortfall in IPA funding, which brought with it the risk of having to adopt a selective approach to implementation of actions in proportion to the level of available funds. A decision on this would need to be taken possibly in May/June 2009.
3. While appreciating the progress made in implementing the IPA, Members expressed deep concern at the prospect of a piecemeal approach, as the IPA is an integrated package of reform.
4. With regard to the preparation of the programme of work and budget, it was recognized that the new budgetary planning cycle, as set out in the IPA, could not be entirely put into practice in 2009, as it will be rolled out in its entirety in the 2010-2011 biennium, including informal consultation with members on Impact Focus Areas and extra-budgetary funding in the first quarter of 2011.
5. As a means to further build confidence in the IPA process, it was pointed out that there should be greater transparency in the recruitment of senior staff, with particular reference to the new post of Deputy Director-General (DDG). The current DDG suggested that both DDG posts might be advertised as vacancies and filled at the same time.
6. Management illustrated how progress on IPA implementation will be reported in future. The proposed simpler reporting arrangement was found appropriate since it struck a balance between the requirements of Members and the level of input feasible for individual Projects. Details of completed actions would be given on a monthly basis in dashboard format, with concerns such as deviations from the workplan being highlighted in textual form.

Review of the Trust Fund budget situation

1. Members welcomed the new contribution of USD 20,000 from Tanzania as well as the pledges announced by other countries, including the United Kingdom, Finland and Turkey. The issue of delays caused by administrative lead times for the disbursement of contributions to the Trust Fund was underscored. Of the USD 3.15 million cash received in the Trust Fund, USD 236,000 had been disbursed.

2. Appreciating the challenge to reach the required level of IPA funding, and the prime responsibility of Member nations to make available voluntary funding, the Chairperson of the CoC-IEE recalled the successful fund raising campaign led by members in the drive to raise contributions for the IEE in 2006-07. He urged that this be repeated through a champion and a network of Permanent Representatives to ensure that the IPA would be implemented as an integrated package. Members agreed on the need for timely actions for both Members and Management given the joint nature of the challenge. Members nominated the Ambassador of Italy in absentia as a possible champion. His reply is awaited.
3. Members were informed that the Director-General would write to the membership once again to make a further appeal for contributions to the Trust Fund. The recently adopted newsletter on FAO Renewal and informal briefings to members were part of management's efforts to build support for IPA funding in a context of international competition for resources. The next issue of the newsletter *Members' Update - FAO Renewal* would provide an update on contributions to the Trust Fund. It was proposed that creative ways of contributing to the IPA should also be considered, including the possibility for host governments to further defray the costs of country or sub-regional offices to allow more regular programme resources to be committed in support of reform.

Possible measures for consultations with NGOs/CSOs in the work of the CoC-IEE

1. Based on guidance provided by the CoC-IEE at its 21 January 2009 meeting, Members discussed the modalities presented orally and outlined in the Management paper entitled *Possible measures for consultation with NGOs/CSOs in the work of the CoC-IEE* (available at <http://www.fao.org/uploads/media/NGOMeasuresK4431.pdf>). The two modalities put forward were: (i) presentation of written remarks by international NGOs (INGOs) on relevant areas for FAO renewal; and (ii) participation of INGOs at CoC-IEE meetings.
2. Recognizing the importance of the contribution INGOs make to the work of the Organization, it was noted that the proposed modalities were not exclusive and could both be pursued. However, the criteria for INGO participation, and the costs of their involvement, needed to be more clearly described. This would be provided in a subsequent Management paper.

Annex

Agenda for the meeting

1. Chair's introduction
2. Progress report on actions in implementing the IPA subject to funding
3. Review of the Trust Fund budget situation
4. Possible measures for consultation with NGOs/CSOs in the work of the CoC-IEE